1634

STC 9023

By the King.

A Proclamation for reforming and preuenting the frauds frequently practiſed, aſwell in the ouer-weight of Butter-Casks, as in the falſe packing of Butter.

WHereas Our louing Subiects the Freemen of Our Citie of London trading in Butter and Cheeſe, haue by their Petition lately preſented vnto Vs, humbly ſhewed that time out of minde euery Firkin of Butter hath vſed and ought to bee of the weight of fifty ſixe pounds neat Butter beſides the Caſke, and the Caſke eight pounds and no more; But by the greedy and couetous practiſes of ſome deceiptfull perſons, who are the makers and packers of Butter, moſt part of the Firkins that are filled and packed, do weigh ſome twelue, and ſome foureteene pounds the emptie Caſke, And both Caſke and Butter for the moſt part, weigh not aboue ſixty or ſixty and two pounds, and many times but fifty eight pounds, And that by meanes thereof Our louing Subiects are dayly deceiued of foure, ſixe, and eight pounds of Butter, and ſometimes more in each Firkin, and ſo accordingly in greater and leſſer Veſſells: And likewiſe that the makers and packers of Butter doe vſually packe vp corrupt Butter with their beſt Creame-butter, to the no leſſe abuſe and deceipt of Our louing Subiects; For preuention whereof Our ſaid Subiects the Free-men of London moſt humbly prayed, That wee would be graciouſly pleaſed by Our Letters Patents to appoint one perſon of truſt, Authorizing him and his Deputies to Brand and ſet a Marke on the outſide of each Firkin, Kilderkin, Barrell and other Caſke, and Veſſell whatſoeuer wherein Butter is to be packt and put vp, within Our Kingdome of England, and Dominion of Wales, to expreſſe the weight of the ſame with allowance to each Caſke for ſeaſoning.

And withall to prohibite all makers and packers of Butter not to fill or pack vp Butter into any Firkin, Kilderkin, Barrell, or other Vessell whatsoeuer, vntill such Officer or his Deputies haue so Branded or marked the same empty Caske or Vessell, vpon paine of forfeiture aswell of the Butter as the Vessell.

And that the said Officer, and his Deputies, might haue power to search for, seize and take away all such Firkins, and other Vessells of Butter, as he or they should find filled and packed vnmarked and falsely packed as aforesayd, which Petition we referring to the Consideration of the Lords, & others of Our priuie Councell, vpon due Consideration had thereupon, it was thought very requisite that the sayd deceits and abuses should be speedily reformed: And the best meanes for the doing thereof was also conceiued to be by appointing such an Officer to Brand and marke all the said emptie Caske & other Vessell before they be filled, thereby to expresse the weight, and contents on the outside thereof, as was humbly desired by the said freemen of London: Wee therefore for the auoiding and preuenting hereafter of all the abuses, and deceits before specified for the good, and benefit of all Our Louing Subiects, did by Our Letters Patents, dated the second day of July last past, for vs, Our heires, and Successors, appoint, erect, create, and make an Office, aswell for the gaging of Butter, as for the Branding, and marking of all empty Butter-Caske, and Vessell.

And we reposing trust, and confidence in the fidelitie, industry, diligence and experience of Captaine Iohn Read, did at the nomination of the said freemen of London, Trading in Butter, and Cheese, thereby giue and graunt to him, his Deputies, and Assignes, during his naturall life, the said Office of gaging, Branding and marking of all empty Butter-Caske, and Vessell within Our said Realme of England, and Dominion of Wales. And also according as was thought fit by Our said Subiects the freemen of Our said City, Wee did by Our said letters Patents, as also we doe by these presents ordaine and appoint that the said Captaine Iohn Read, his Deputies and Assignes, shall haue, take and receiue of all and euery person and persons whatsoeuer, who shall bring the said Caske or other Vessell to be marked or Branded, vpon the Branding or marking of euery Firkin the summe of two pence, and so proportionably according to the same rate for euery lesser or greater Caske or Vessell.

And we do hereby straightly charge, prohibite, and forbid all and euery makers and packers of Butter, within this Our Realme of England, and Dominion of Wales, that they nor any of them doe at any time or times hereafter, from and after the first day of March next ensuing the date hereof, presume to fill or packe vp any Butter into any Firkin, Kilderkin, Pot or other Vessell whatsoeuer, to be put to sale, before such time or vntill the said Captaine Iohn Read, or his Assignes, or his or their Deputy or Deputies haue first gaged and marked euery such Caske and vessell, and set his Brand or marke thereupon expressing the weight thereof on the outside, whereby the buyer and buyers of any such Butter, may haue fifty fiue pounds of neate Butter in euery Firkin, and so after the same rate in euery other Vessell, Pot, and Caske to be filled with Butter, proportionably. And likewise we doe hereby prohibite, that no person, or persons whatsoeuer, from and after the day aforesayd, doe buy any Butter, put vp in any Vessell or Caske, vnlesse the same be first Branded and marked as aforesaid.

And alſo that the ſaid makers and packers of Butter doe not preſume to make vp, or packe into any ſuch Veſſell, or Caſke, any bad or corrupt Butter, with good Creame-butter, vpon paine of being puniſhed in Our Court of Starre-Chamber, as contemners of Our Royall Commands, and as falſifiers, and deceiuers of Our people.

And Wee doe hereby giue full power and authority vnto the ſaid Captaine Iohn Reade, and his Aſſignes, and to his and their Deputy, and Deputies, and euery of them with the aſſiſtance of a Conſtable, or other Officer, to enter into any place, or places whatſoeuer, at conuenient times, to ſearch for all ſuch Veſſell, and Caſke, as ſhall be filled with Butter vnmarked, or vnbranded, or falſely, or corruptly filled as aforeſaid, and finding any ſuch Caſke, or Veſſell, to ſeize and deſtroy the ſame, and to cauſe the Offenders to be duely puniſhed.

And that Our purpoſe herein may bee firmely executed for the good and benefit of Our Subiects, Wee doe hereby prohibite and forbid all and euery perſon, and perſons whatſoeuer, that none of them, other then the ſaid Captaine Iohn Reade, and his Aſſignes, and his and their Deputie, and Deputies doe take vpon them, or preſume, or attempt to marke, gage, or brand any empty Butter-caſke, or Veſſell whatſoeuer, or intermeddle, or doe any thing to the ſaid Office belonging, or appertaining, contrary to the true meaning of theſe preſents, vpon paine of Our high indignation, and diſpleaſure, and of ſuch other paines, penalties, and puniſhments, as by the Lawes of this Our Realme of England, or by Our Prerogatiue Royall, can, or may bee inflicted vpon the offenders herein, for breach, and contempt of this Our Royall pleaſure and Commandement.

And laſtly, Wee doe hereby for Vs, Our Heires, and Succeſſours, ſtraitly Charge and Command, all and ſingular Maiors, Juſtices of Peace, Sheriffs, Bayliffs, Conſtables, Headboroughs, and all other Officers, and Miniſters whatſoeuer, of Vs, Our Heires, and Succeſſours, to bee ayding, aſſiſting, and helping, vnto the ſaid Captaine Iohn Reade, and his Aſſignes, and his, and their Deputy, and Deputies, and euery of them, in the due execution of the ſaid Office, and of Our will and pleaſure herein expreſſed in all things, according to the true meaning of theſe preſents, and in no wiſe to hinder him, or them, in the execution and performance of this ſeruice, As they tender Our pleaſure, and will auoyd the contrary at their perills.

Giuen at Our Court at Theobalds, the thirteenth day of Nouember, in the tenth yeere of Our Reigne.

God ſaue the King.

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